IN THE OLD DAYS.

Dear Grandmamma sighed
As she slowly untied
The packet we found in the loft;
The paper was blush,
The words were too foolish,
The sentiments, we thought, were soft.

Now, if our dear Granny
Were young, like our Fanny,
Who lingered last night at the gate,
It would not seem queer
To be called "love" and "dear,"
And "prithee, sweet, tell me my fate."

But it sounded so silly
To sign "Your sweet Willie,"
"Who worships the ground at your feet."
Now Grandpa takes snuff
And thinks it enough
To doze, in the sun in his seat.
When Grandma was young
Her praises were sung
By rapturous lovers a score;
I wish 'twas the fashion
To record the blind passion
In verses of twenty or more.

Then pen, ink and paper,
Some wax and a taper,
Were all the expenses incurred;
Now, costly bouquets,
Drives, operas, plays,
And "seats in the parquette preferred."

Then, old-fashioned ways,
The minuet's maze,
The sonnets by messenger sent;
A seat meant for one,
Her promise is won,
And all without costing a cent.

—Chicago Journal.

MY FIRST CIGAR.

Reasons That Determined Me To Let It Be My Last.

"Go and buy a cigar."

Mr. Nimon was a carpenter employed in building a warehouse for grain-shippers at Wyckles, a little station on the Wabash railway, in Central Illinois, and, as he spoke, he handed me a five-cent piece.

My parents lived at Wyckles. I was the youngest of four sons, and was ten years old at the time—just the right age to think it smart to step around with a cigar between my teeth.

I had always been a favorite with Mr. Nimon, and I suppose he thought he was doing the right thing when he told me to buy a cigar, or, he may have thought the attractions of "gum-drops" and "taffy-on-a-stick" would be too much for me and I would lay out the nickel in those luxuries instead of buying a cigar with it. But, if such were his thoughts, he was mistaken, for I took the nickel, and, marching into a store near by, kept by a cripple named Bradshaw, planked it down upon the counter and asked for a cigar with as indifferent an air as I could assume, with the doubts of my ability to conquer the weed already assailing me.

The store-keeper gave me a quizzical look, reached for a box, hesitated for a moment, and then took down another. Throwing the lid back, he set before me some very dark and ominous-looking cigars.

Had I been an experienced smoker and a judge of cigars, I would have known that the ones before me were particularly dangerous specimens, but I wasn't, and did'nt, and so, in blissful unconciousness of what was before me, I selected one of the noisome weeds, bit off the end (as I had seen men do), and then lighting it, stuck it in my mouth and strutted out of the store with my head thrown back and chest expanded, puffing away like one to the manner born.

Had I seen the amused smile upon Bradshaw's face as I left his store, my suspicions might have been aroused, but I didn't see it, and so continued to step round with the cigar between my teeth, feeling, or rather, endeavoring to feel—for the cigar tasted horrible, and made me have a queer sensation in the region of my stomach—that I was every inch a man.

But this state of affairs lasted but a short time. Had I taken the trouble to look at myself in a mirror after five minutes at that cigar, I would have noticed an unusual pallor to my face, and a whiteness about my lips foreign to them in a normal state. And my stomach! from a simple state of sickness it had broken out in open rebellion, and the war which was waged between the legitimate contents of said stomach and the poisonous saliva and bits of tobacco which I had unwittingly swallowed was awful while it lasted, and it lasted quite long enough to suit me, I assure you.

Needless to say, perhaps, the tobacco conquered, and around behind some cars which were standing on the sidetrack—where I had gone as quickly as a swimming head and staggering footsteps would let me—I was speedily relieved of both contending forces.

But, oh! how weak, and sick and faint, and wretched I did feel!—not a bit like a man now—and thinking I would keep quiet for awhile, until I felt better, I crawled under one of the cars and laid down beside the rails. How it happened that I went to sleep I do not know. Perhaps it was induced by my particular weak state, both mentally and physically, at that time; but, be that as it may, certain it is that I had not lain there ten minutes before I was asleep, sound as a top.

How long I slept I do not know, but I was suddenly awakened by a queer, grinding, gliding noise, accompanied by a regular click-click! click-click!

I knew the sound only too well, and even if my eyes had not told me what occasioned the queer noise, I would have known what made it:

The cars under which I was lying were moving, and at a speed which would have made it dangerous for me to have attempted to spring out between the wheels, even if I had been on my feet, braced, ready for the leap.

But I wasn't. I was lying flat upon my back upon the thin layer of earth which covered the crossties, between the rails, and to attempt to regain my feet would have been suicidal, for the trucks of the cars would have knocked me down and I would have been run over by the big iron wheels and killed.

What to do I did not know. I was frightened, almost paralyzed with fear, and I lay motionless, watching with a species of fascination the rapidly revolving wheels and listening to their click-click! click-click! as they crossed the joints where the ends of the rails came together.

Then a terrible thought struck me: the cars could not move without motive power, where was the engine?

There was about a foot of space between my body and the trucks of the cars, and I cautiously raised my head a trifle and glanced down along my body in the direction from which the cars were coming.

Horror of horrors! The engine was on that end of the string of cars, pushing them, and only two cars intervened between it and my trembling self!

I was paralyzed with horror for a moment. The ash-pan on all locomotive engines is beneath the body of the monster, and is invariably only about six inches from the rails. It would be impossible for it to pass over the body of a child, much less that of a good-sized boy, without mangling, scraping and tearing it to pieces.

I realized this with a chill of terror, but what to do I could not think. It really seemed as if there was nothing I could do—that I had no choice in the matter, but would be forced to lie there and be mangled—scraped—torn to pieces beneath that awful ash-pan, and I involuntarily closed my eyes and shuddered.

The cars were moving at a rapid rate of speed now, and as my eyes came open again, the rear end of the first of the two remaining cars was just passing over me.

The forward end of the last car passed rapidly, and the other end approached.

It would be followed by the tender, then the engine, under which was the ash-pan, which would mangle my poor body in another moment.

The horrible thought nerved me to desperation, and, as the end of the car reached me, I threw up my hands and clutched the rapidly-moving trucks with a grip made trebly strong by terror.

I was jerked with such suddenness and force that my arms were nearly pulled out of their sockets, but I held on with an energy born of despair, and was dragged along with the car, my feet thumping against the ties at a rate which threatened to relieve my shoes of their heel-taps if not my feet of the shoes themselves.

But I retained my hold. To lose my grasp and fall upon the track would be certain death—death in a particularly horrible form, and I shuddered and gripped the trucks with renewed energy.

As onward I was dragged, I made attempts to draw myself up upon the trucks, but it was beyond my power and I could only grip them tighter and wait.

Would the cars never stop?

Onward and still onward I was dragged, across two cattle-guards, where the wagon-road crossed the railroad, and for fifty yards farther, when just as I was on the point of having to let go my hold—it really seemed as if I could not retain my grasp a moment longer—I noticed that the speed of the cars was diminishing.

Little by little they slackened up, slower and slower they moved, but not until they had come to a dead stand-still did I dare let go my hold and crawl out from under the car.

This I did and then sank upon the ground beside the railroad track, utterly unnerved—almost fainting. And my arms and legs, how sore they were! It was two weeks at least, before they return to any thing like their normal condition of usefulness.

The train took the cars—which were loaded with shelled corn—away with it, and as I stood in the middle of the track and saw the old red caboose disappear around the curve in the deep cut a quarter of a mile to the east of the little station of Wyckles, I thought, with a shudder, of the narrow escape which I had had from a horrible death, and I registered a vow to never, never again touch tobacco in any form.

And I have kept my vow.—S. A. D. Cox, in Yankee Blade.

SOME RARE OLD BONDS.

They Were Yellow From Age, But Proved to Be Worth $70,000 in Gold.

It was while Judge Folger was Secretary (said an old Treasury official.) One morning an old man came in to me who was from a New England State. He said that about twenty years ago he found some old stocks or bonds among the papers of an uncle (mentioning his name); he had been a man of National reputation for ability, and had a comfortable fortune for those days—that is from 1830 to 1840—and he had come to the United States Treasury to find out if they were worth any thing, as they seemed to be United States bonds. I looked at them. They were ten of the "old debt" bonds, and were indeed curiosities. They were old and yellow from age, but were worth, principal and interest, in gold $70,000, for there were ten years' interest due on them. You can imagine the old man's amazement when I told him this. "Why, I would gladly have taken $5,000 for them," said he, "and I offered them to a Boston banker for less than that, but he rather superciliously and contemptuously declined to buy them at any figure." I took the old man in to see Judge Folger, who was very much interested in the matter when I explained it to him. He had never seen any of the "old loan" securities, and after these were paid and canceled I believe he directed that one of them be framed and preserved. Well, in less than half an hours' time the old New-Englander walked out of the building with a check in his pocket on the New York Sub-Treasury for $70,000 in gold. How that "smart" Boston banker must have cursed his own ignorance and stupidity when he learned what he had thrown away."—St. Louis Republic.

—A duck got into a queer fix near Rochester, Pa., the other day. The ducks of that place eat the acorns which are scattered over the ground under the oak trees, and this particular duck ate so many that when the owner returned from work in the evening it was lying prostrate, unable to walk or squawk. He looked into the mouth and saw that its throat was clogged with acorns. He tried to drive them down, but as he failed in this, he cut its head off, and nearly a half peck of acorns fell out of its body.

A VIGOROUS OLD MAN.

Cardinal Newman's Life in the Oratory of St. Philip Nevi.

Down in bustling Birmingham there is one quiet spot. It is at the oratory of St. Philip Nevi. If you were to happen within the walls of the oratory some day, just at the hour when sunset is being followed by twilight, you might hear stealing down the long, silent corridors of the building sweet strains of music drawn from the strings of a violin by a skilled and delicate touch. If you should ask one of the robed fathers whence the music comes he would probably smile and answer:

"It is His Eminence, the Superior, who is playing."

The answer would be correct, for it is on an old and valuable Stradivarius that the greatest churchman in England, and one of the greatest masters of the English language finds relaxation and peace as the evening falls. And the master of the violin is none other than John Henry Newman, who was at Oxford the college mate of Gladstone, Pusey, Hurrell, Froude, Keble and others, who was ordained in the English Church and was one of the select university preachers and vicar of St. Mary's, Oxford, but who is now a Cardinal in the Roman Church, which he joined over forty years ago. He is one of England's vigorous old men. He is older than either Gladstone or The O'Gorman Mahon, he is almost as old as the nineteenth century, for he was born in 1801. But as the Cardinal gently touches his violin in the twilight hours, he is content in the belief that his life work is done. He has passed through the storm and now is safely moored in a peaceful haven. In the oratory he is quiet and undisturbed, and his days pass peacefully and without disturbing incident. The revolution of religious thought which the Earl of Beaconsfield declared to have been the greatest that England had seen in more than three hundred years, and in which Newman was a leading figure, is a thing of the past, and I found that Cardinal Newman's popularity extended through all ranks and denominations. Among the visitors to his retreat you will find men and women of various creeds and from almost everywhere. There is but one opinion as to his standing as a master in the literary art. Years ago an eminent English writer said that if he were sentenced to solitary confinement and allowed his choice of books, being limited to one or two writers, he would prefer some of Newman's to even Shakspeare himself. This will give an idea of the manner in which Newman is regarded here.

As has been said, the days of the Cardinal are very quiet days now. He is approaching ninety years of age, and has all his life been a vigorous worker. He rarely preaches, and writes but little. He still rises early, as he has always done, and his mornings are given to devotions, and to looking after the affairs of the oratory that he loves so well and which he established some years ago. The love that the students and priests at the oratory bear for the aged Cardinal is touching. Between all of them and the Cardinal the warmest friendship exists. The youngest as well as the oldest of them finds in the old man one who is always ready to sympathize with and assist them when called upon. The same gentle character which made him so popular at Oxford has not been changed by age.

And so the days at the oratory pass on peacefully and quietly as the old man could wish. There is no bitterness in them. All the bitterness is gone. The opponents of other days are his friends. He has no enemies in the evening of his life. And so in the evening we can leave him, a smile on his gentle old face, with his old violin, softly playing the airs of other days. And so let the night quietly fall.—London Letter.

A NEGRO CAPITALIST.

The Romantic Career of a Runaway Slave in Washington.

A letter from Centralia, in the new State of Washington, says: Thirty-seven years ago George Washington, a runaway Virginia slave, reached a little prairie in the fork of the Chehalis and the Skookumchuck, and seeing a fine supply of deer and pheasants he fixed his camp there.

In the woods and solitude of the far Northwest he was free and he was happy. He managed somehow to get some potato seed and some fruit plants, and, later on, hogs and cattle. The prolific soil made him rich in hogs and cattle and corn and fruit and vegetables, but the white man began to come, and Washington discovered that the curse of color was still upon him, and that he could obtain no legal title to the soil he cultivated.

He adopted various expedients, till the war made him a free man. He married a colored woman, a native of the Sandwich Islands, and when the railroad people came to George's farm they made a station there to secure supplies. They called it Centralia, as it was midway between Columbia and the Sound. They had no notion then that it was also the very heart of a magnificent farm country, and that in its neighborhood the finest coal and iron mines in America are to be had. Streets and villas and churches and schools and hotels and banks, and newspaper offices now occupy the spot where George Washington's flocks and herds used to roam, and where his corn grew. A gun and a pair of blankets were all he brought to the spot where Centralia stands to-day; but George Washington is now a big capitalist, probably the possessor of half a million in bank-notes, and still owning three hundred acres of town sites.

He is seventy-two, but hale and hearty, and if he lives a dozen years he will be a millionaire many times over. They tell me that in business he is as shrewd as a fox, but one is forcibly attracted to him by the kindly smile that plays about his features, telling plainly that neither age nor injustice has soured the disposition of the runaway colored Virginian. Moreover, every poor man who comes here finds a friend in the manumitted slave, for he gives him a house lot for $150, and allows any length of time to pay. He loves to stroll about the town and watch it growing.

AUTOGRAPH QUILTS.

A New York Lady Explains an Idea Original With Her.

This is the day of autograph hunters. The epidemic assumes various forms. One lady of my acquaintance has an album of several hundred postal cards from people whom she admits she never saw, and never expects to see. Another rage is the quilt autograph. Few people at present have the temerity to aspire to the crazy-quilt. For my part I have not yet been able to decide whether I like such things or not, for I have seen so many that were originally intended to be things of beauty, witched and bewitched into what really appeared more the productions of the weakened brain of some poor æsthetic lunatic. In fact I never see a crazy-quilt without a vivid childhood rememberance of a kaleidoscope view I once had after falling from a high swing. Autograph quilts containing a block from each State and Territory in the Union are also much in vogue.

My idea of an autograph quilt is entirely different, and as it is original with myself I will give it. I am saving a piece of each dress and apron of my children's clothes from their babyhood up. Upon each piece I sew a bit of paper with the date and age of the child at the time it wore the garment. After I shall have ceased collecting I shall make each a quilt of the pieces from the dress of each particular child and then with indelible ink mark each block with the age of the child at the time the garment from which it was taken was worn and also with the name of the garment. What think you of my idea? Try it, mothers. It will be something the children can always keep, and something they will prize above gold, long after dear mother has crossed the Mystic river into the great beyond. I love to piece quilts and expect to be just old-fashioned in that way all my life. During our warm summer weather we have had sewing classes in which we have taught our young girls how to sew, and piece quilts, and we find it one of the best ways of teaching little girls how to use a needle, and really an economical way too, for every household has more or less pieces to spare, and the quilts are always valuable.—Mrs. F. A. Warner, in Rural New Yorker.

RECEPTION GOWNS.

Pretty Gowns Particularly Suitable for Youthful Figures.

Many of the new gowns are all in one piece, whether cut in princesse breadths or with the skirt sewed to the waist, or in the now quaint fashion with the waist shaped by innumerable fine tucks and shirrings at the top of breadths which extend from the neck to the foot. The last fashion is especially pretty in soft camel's-hair and other fine woolens made up with insertions of herring-bone or other open crocheted stitches done in silken threads between the shirred puffs and above hems or tucks. Thus a graceful empire gown for a slender young figure is made of gray camel's-hair all in one from top to bottom and only two and three-eighths of a yard wide at the foot. It is fastened behind, is without reeds or bustle, and is made over a fitted silk slip that is held in place by several short whalebones set below the bust and curving out on the hips. The high neck has three gathered puffs in round yoke shape separated by herring-bone insertion crocheted in gray silk, and below the bust fine lengthwise tucks taper the fabric to fit the waist; similar tucks extend all the way up the back, concealing its fastening by hooks and eyes. The long sleeves, slightly full and high on the shoulders, taper to the wrists, and have but one seam, which is plaited inside the elbow, and three rows of herring-bone insertion are about the wrists. This simple gown has only a frill of the wool gathered to edge its neck, and is worn with an amber necklace and bracelets. Old-rose, pale green, Eiffel red and cream white wool dresses will be made by this model for very young ladies and for girls just in their teens to wear at Christmas parties, and to assist at afternoon receptions throughout the winter.—Louisville Courier-Journal.

Warmth and Coolness in Clothing.

Clothing possesses no warmth in itself, but, as it is a more or less poor conductor of heat, it prevents the escape of the bodily warmth. Woolen fabrics contain a large quantity of air entangled in their meshes, which, being a poor conductor of heat, adds considerably to the warmth of clothing made from them. In hot weather we wear light cotton or linen clothing, so as to allow as much of the bodily heat to escape as possible. There is a prejudice in favor of light-colored clothing for summer wear, but it is hardly based on scientific grounds. Dark-colored cloth is the best radiator, allowing the bodily heat to escape freely, while white clothing absorbs less of the heat radiated directly from the sun. Therefore, to dress scientifically in summer, one should wear dark clothing in the shade and light clothing when exposed to the sun's rays. Practically, the matter of appearance is the only one to be considered, as the warmth or coolness of clothing is not appreciably affected by its color.—Popular Science News.

—A writer in the Quarterly Journal of Inebriety declares that the practice of drinking cologne is becoming common, and that he has discovered it as the cause of obscure and complex nervous disorders in many women. Here is one more evidence of the obstacles to practical prohibition, for if alcoholic tipplers are to be made abstemious by law rather than persuasion evidently cologne must go when all alcoholic beverages are ruled out.

—A poplar tree of unusual size was lately felled on a farm in Utica township, Clark county, Ind., and as it struck the ground, a large limb broke off, in the heart of which was found the antlers of a deer, a cow's horn, and a number of curious shells. The mystery is how they got there.

—A Toledo manufacturer exhibited at the Detroit exposition a cake of silver soap weighing 894 pounds.